United Nations A/62/PV.117

General Assembly

Sixty-second session

Official Records

117th plenary meeting
Thursday, 4 September 2008, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kerim ..... (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, President of the Republic of Zambia

The President: It is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of the late President of the Republic of Zambia, His Excellency Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, who passed away on Tuesday, 19 August 2008.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I request the representative of Zambia to convey our condolences to the Government and the people of Zambia and to the bereaved family of His Excellency Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The President: I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: It is with great sadness that I add my voice to those of all present in paying tribute to the late President of Zambia, Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa. Like all of us, I was saddened by his sudden passing.

As Vice-President and later President, Mr. Mwanawasa was at the forefront of Zambian politics at a time of exceptional challenge and change in his country and in the southern African region as a whole. He was also a good friend of the Organization.

Four years ago, addressing the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, he expressed strong support for an effective United Nations and stressed the need to take advantage of what he called the immense problem-solving potential of multilateralism. For that sentiment and much else, his voice resonated in these halls, and I know we shall all miss his presence in the world arena.

I profoundly admired his contribution as Chair of the Southern African Development Community, in particular in leading the efforts of the international community to restore democracy in Zimbabwe. My own personal interaction with him in numerous telephone calls and meetings were always instructive and valuable.

I again extend my profound condolences to the family of President Mwanawasa and to the people and Government of Zambia at this difficult time. I wish the people of Zambia vision, courage and fortitude in the time ahead.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of India, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Sen (India): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Asian Group to pay a tribute to a great son of Africa, the late President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa of Zambia, who passed away on 19 August.

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President Mwanawasa was more than a distinguished statesman and a visionary leader. He was also a committed democrat. His years of service to the people of Zambia were marked by his staunch commitment to the ideals of representative Government and selfless public service, a point that was also noted by the Secretary-General earlier. His tenure at the helm was marked by an impressive record of economic growth with low inflation, which began the process of making Zambia an economic success story.

President Mwanawasa will be remembered by his people and by the world for his tireless promotion of human rights, democracy and good governance, as well as for his consistent humility. Beyond his service to his own country, President Mwanawasa's vision was exemplified by a commitment to the larger calls of peace and stability on the African continent. His years of service were distinguished by the courage of his convictions and the force of his personal example. Astute diplomacy and wisdom were among the hallmarks of his leadership style.

President Mwanawasa will be remembered for his invaluable contribution to conflict resolution and peacemaking in Africa. The tragic departure of President Mwanawasa deprives Zambia, Africa and the world at large of an outstanding leader. The international community, and in particular the Organization, are poorer at this juncture, for in his passing we have lost a leader whose vision exemplified the high ideals and principles of the Organization.

On behalf of the members of the Asian Group, I extend our heartfelt condolences to the people and Government of Zambia on their tragic loss. It is one that we share as members of the international community. Our deepest sympathies and prayers are with the family of the departed leader. The Asian Group stands in solidarity with the people and Government of Zambia at this tragic juncture in their history. However, we are convinced that the people of Zambia have the strength and resilience to persist on the path of peace, progress and prosperity, and thereby burnish the legacy of this great son of Africa.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Guinea, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): It is with deep emotion that I speak on behalf of the African States before the Assembly, which is meeting to honour the memory of the late President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa of the Republic of Zambia.

Allow me to express the African Group's gratitude to you, Sir, for this felicitous initiative, which reflects the international community's recognition of Africa and the fate of its illustrious leaders.

The African Group learned, with great sadness and deep pain, of the premature demise of the President of Zambia in Paris last Tuesday, 19 August, at the age of 59. Having collapsed in Sharm el-Sheikh, at a meeting of the African Union, at which he held both the presidency of Zambia and the chairmanship of the Southern African Development Community, in the end Mr. Mwanawasa died on the frontlines of Africa's struggle to achieve its political, economic and social development.

Elected to lead his country in 2002 and re-elected in 2006, the late Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, third President of Zambia since the country's accession to independence in 1964, was the very picture of an African leader of great vision, completely devoted to the cause of his people, who contributed to building peace, stability and prosperity in Zambia and in the region. Zambia today is proud of its very promising macroeconomic position, with growth rates of over 6 per cent and currency reserves of over $1 billion.

We pay tribute to President Mwanawasa for his successful work and for his tireless struggle against poverty and corruption. President Mwanawasa rightly earned the respect and gratitude of the African and international communities for his unflagging efforts to promote and maintain the values of good governance and hope-bringing democracy in an ever-changing continent. In that regard, he made a tremendous contribution to disseminating the values and ideals of the African continent and the United Nations.

The African Group also expresses its gratitude for the perseverance and determination shown by President Mwanawasa in building the bases for peace, integration and regionally integrated growth as the acting Chair of the Southern African Development Community. In paying tribute to that great African leader, the African Group continues to believe that the people of Zambia, inspired by the life, action and devotion of the late President, will remain united in solidarity on their path towards democratic and economic development in that country and in the region.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our deep sympathy and condolences to the family of President Mwanawasa and to the people and Government of his country. The African Group calls upon the international community to maintain, enhance and extend its well-deserved support to the people of Zambia so that they can continue the process of building a prosperous, united and dynamic country, in full social peace and harmony.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Prica (Bosnia and Herzegovina): It is my sad duty to address the Assembly, in my capacity as the Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States for this month, on the occasion of the death of His Excellency Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, President of Zambia and Chairperson of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

President Mwanawasa was born on 3 September 1948, which means that he would have celebrated his 60th birthday yesterday. Instead, Zambia mourned its great leader. With deep sorrow on behalf of the Group, I would like to convey my condolences to the family and friends of the late President and to the people and Government of Zambia. It is a truly great loss for the African Union, the entire African continent and the democratic world as a whole.

President Mwanawasa had numerous professional distinctions, having practised law after graduating from the University of Zambia in 1973 before going into Government service. Among them was certainly becoming the first Zambian lawyer to be appointed advocate and solicitor of the Supreme Court of England and Wales.

It is widely known that he did not tolerate injustice in any form. A former lawyer, after becoming a president in 2002, Mr. Mwanawasa was regarded as one of Africa's most progressive leaders. His fight against corruption was recognized by many, turning the southern African nation into one of the continent's economic success stories. Under his rule, Zambia enjoyed strong economic growth.

As Chairman of SADC, President Mwanawasa worked tirelessly to uphold the values of good governance, speaking out against human rights abuses and threats to democracy when many others were silent. He also played a key role in the struggle to end apartheid in South Africa. He was a lawyer with a steely determination to right wrongs and fight corruption and injustice, and a President who served his noble nation with pride at a time of outstanding challenges and change in his country. The entire nation has lost a great man with strong vision and leadership.

Once again, I convey my deepest condolences on behalf of the Group to the family of the late President and the people and Government of Zambia. May he rest in peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bolivia, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group.

Mr. Siles Alvarado (Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. Allow me to extend our most sincere condolences to the people and Government of Zambia on the occasion of the tragic passing of the late President of that brother African country, His Excellency Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, last month.

His exemplary public life, his honour as an African politician, which was inherited from the spirit of his tribe, the Lenje, led him to be elected to lead the multiparty democratic movement as President of Zambia in 2001 and re-elected in 2006. His career in Government, guided by a vocation of service to the cause of his people and the fullest respect for law, was exemplified in his fight against corruption. His leadership and determination in efforts to combat violence allowed his country to join the group of African countries that embarked upon a promising course of economic and social development. The establishment of a social security system was one of the most significant achievements for his people.

Africa has lost one of its great leaders, and the Latin American and Caribbean Group pays tribute to Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa for serving his people with dignity and honour. Allow me to call on the Permanent Mission of Zambia to transmit, on behalf of the Group, our sincerest condolences to the family of President Mwanawasa for the irreparable loss of their loved one.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Greece, who will speak on behalf of the Western European and other States Group.

Mr. Mourikis (Greece): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the Group of Western European and other States. It is with deep sorrow that we mourn the passing of His Excellency Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, late President of the Republic of Zambia.

On behalf of the Western European and other States Group, I would like to convey my deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Zambia. Our condolences also go to the family of Mr. Mwanawasa. At this difficult time, our thoughts and prayers are with the people of the Republic of Zambia, whom the President served with commitment and honour.

President Mwanawasa was a visionary leader who will be long remembered and admired for his contribution to economic development, good governance, regional peace, stability and respect for the rule of law. He was a strong advocate for multiparty democracy, and his legacy provides an example to leaders who follow in his steps. He promoted democracy in his country and made great efforts to reduce poverty through solid economic programme and reforms. It is well-known that President Mwanawasa did not tolerate injustice in any form. He did his utmost for the development of the African continent and made a great contribution to Zambia's standing in the world, as can be attested by all the Group's members.

The late President won the confidence of the international community through his economic reforms and national initiatives against corruption, which permitted Zambia to enjoy considerable economic growth and to achieve debt relief. Furthermore, in the framework of the Southern African Development Community, he took significant initiatives for progress in the region.

May the late President's soul rest in peace. We all hope that the Government and the people of Zambia will overcome their sadness and continue to make progress towards the further prosperity of their country.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): I stand before the General Assembly with several emotions. I am saddened by the untimely death of President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa. It is a loss to his family, especially his wife Maureen, but his death is also a loss to his country, Zambia, the African continent and the world.

While mourning his death, I celebrate his achievements and his many contributions. President Mwanawasa served his country well. He dedicated himself to improving the lives of the people of Zambia. He was a champion of good governance and democracy. As President, he launched a sweeping campaign against corruption. Together with his First Lady, he led ambitious programmes to combat malaria and HIV/AIDS. He was a great leader because he was a good servant of his people.

I also celebrate his contributions to Africa. He brought strong and energetic leadership to his role as Chairman of the Southern African Development Community, speaking out against human rights abuses and working to address the crisis in Zimbabwe. His principled and dedicated mediation efforts over the past year were instrumental in advancing the organization's work to promote peace and stability in the region. In helping his country and his continent, President Mwanawasa has helped the world, as we live in a global village and each of us is our neighbour's keeper.

We in the United States treasured his friendship. His legacy provides an example to us all. He will be dearly missed. On behalf of the United States, I extend sincere condolences to President Mwanawasa's wife, Maureen, his family and all Zambians during this difficult time. Lastly, we wish the people of Zambia and the country's leadership all the best. We wish them security, freedom and prosperity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Zambia.

Mrs. Tembo (Zambia): On behalf of the Zambian Government and the Zambian people, I would like to express to you, Mr. President, our sincere gratitude for the great honour of paying tribute to the memory of the late President of the Republic of Zambia, His Excellency Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, State Counsel, who died on 19 August 2008 in France after suffering a stroke in June at the African Union Summit in Egypt.

As we stand here today, we mourn the loss of a distinguished statesman who will be fondly remembered for championing good governance, the rule of law and the fight against corruption. He also went the extra mile to demand of those in his New Deal Administration honesty, commitment and loyalty to Zambia and its people.

President Mwanawasa practised law from 1973, becoming a distinguished lawyer who, in 1992, was conferred with the status of State Counsel in Zambia. He also contributed immensely to litigation and law development in Zambia. Another distinction he achieved was that of becoming, in 1989, the first Zambian lawyer to be appointed advocate and solicitor of the Supreme Court of England and Wales.

Not only was President Mwanawasa concerned about the welfare of Zambians, but he also desired to see peace and development on the entire African continent and the subregion of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). From January to July 2002, he chaired the Organization of African Unity at the time of its transition to the African Union. President Mwanawasa was Chair of SADC from August 2007 to 17 August 2008, when Zambia handed over that role to South Africa.

On what turned out to be his last day alive in Zambia, on 28 June 2008, President Mwanawasa officiated at the Conference of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa in Lusaka, where he spread the message of reconciliation and thanked God for the great gift of peace in the country.

Mr. Mwanawasa was born on 3 September 1948 and was married with six children. He was buried on 3 September 2008 at Embassy Park in Lusaka on the day that would have been his sixtieth birthday. The overwhelming messages of condolences and the large turnout of foreign dignitaries at the burial of President Mwanawasa are testimony to his great leadership.

We would like to express our profound gratitude to the Governments of France and Egypt for their assistance during the illness and bereavement of the late Mr. Mwanawasa. My sincere thanks also go to the Secretary-General and to the representatives of the regional groups and of the host country who have paid tribute in honour of the late President of the Republic of Zambia.

Agenda item 118

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

Report of the Secretary-General (A/62/898)

Draft resolution (A/62/L.48)

Statement by the President

The President: It is my pleasure to welcome participants to this meeting of the General Assembly to mark the first review of the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Strategy, which was adopted unanimously by the General Assembly two years ago, is a testament to the determination of Member States to strengthen the international front to counter terrorism and to increase the role of the United Nations in that regard.

The continued terrorist attacks serve as a stark reminder that terrorism continues to be one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. Acts of terrorism are direct attacks against the values on which the United Nations is founded. They deny the virtues of humanity, dignity and mutual respect for others. Terrorism knows no borders and affects us all. There can be no justification for the senseless and indiscriminate use of violence, and it is our duty to counter it in a unified and resolute manner. Only thus can we honour the memory of the victims of such heinous acts and show solidarity with their loved ones.

As members know, I have made the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy one of the priorities of the General Assembly at its sixty-second session. Throughout the session, we have been engaged in finding ways to best improve our efforts to carry out the commitments set out in the Strategy. Last December, we engaged in an informal midterm assessment of the various measures undertaken by the United Nations as well as by Member States. It was the first time since the adoption of the Strategy that Member States had brought their actions to the Assembly's attention. The meeting sent a clear message that Member States want to take the lead in implementation, with action-oriented partnerships.

I would like to commend the Secretary-General on his continued leadership and to express my gratitude for his comprehensive report on the activities of the United Nations system in implementing the Strategy (A/62/898). The report served as an important

and useful contribution to our deliberations before today's meeting.

I have sought to make sure that there are appropriate avenues of dialogue between the General Assembly and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force in order to keep the membership informed of the developments on which the United Nations system has embarked. I commend Assistant Secretary-General Robert Orr, Chair of the Task Force, for his efforts in carrying out that important function, and I thank him for his continued cooperation during the present session.

During this session, our focus has also been on the various related challenges that have a place in the Global Strategy. Fostering dialogue among cultures and religions, advancing the Millennium Development Goals and promoting the notion of human security are means by which we can address the conditions that are conducive to the spreading of terrorism.

In May, I appointed Ambassador Gert Rosenthal, Permanent Representative of Guatemala, as a facilitator to consult with Member States on the outcome of this meeting. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Ambassador Rosenthal for his skilful stewardship of the negotiations on the draft resolution and to all delegations for their constructive and focused participation.

The draft resolution to be adopted contains a strong condemnation of terrorism and a reaffirmation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It stresses the need for international cooperation against that international threat. It underlines the need for sustained efforts by Member States, which bear the primary responsibility for carrying out the necessary measures, as well as by the United Nations and other appropriate international, regional and subregional organizations.

There is clearly a need to work closely with regional and subregional organizations, which have special knowledge concerning the vulnerabilities and priorities of their own regions. The United Nations should work with States to bolster those regional bodies that do not yet have sufficient counter-terrorism capacity.

The draft resolution also underlines the important part that civil society plays in determining how to enhance the efforts to implement the Strategy. Indeed, civil society is a valuable partner for Governments in ensuring the sustainability of their efforts on the ground.

The draft resolution calls upon the relevant United Nations entities to continue to facilitate the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, and recalls that all measures to prevent and combat terrorism must be undertaken in compliance with international law, in particular human rights and refugee law, as well as with international humanitarian law.

The draft also reminds us of the pivotal role that the General Assembly has played in adopting international legal instruments to counter terrorism. All Member States should strive to become parties to those instruments. In that regard, I am pleased to note that, since the adoption of the Strategy, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism has entered into force.

Those instruments now need to be complemented with a comprehensive convention on international terrorism in order to send a clear message to those who seek to undermine our human security and our freedom. I have been encouraged by some of the progress made in the Ad Hoc Committee during the present session, but we need true political will to resolve the outstanding issues.

The draft resolution also urges the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements to carry out the institutionalization of the Task Force in accordance with the Strategy. I commend the Governments that have provided resources to the Task Force, but it is still essential to ensure stable and sustainable central support. I am confident that the Secretary-General will continue to address that issue in a resolute manner, as requested by Member States.

One of the vital issues during this session has been the interaction between the Assembly and the Task Force. I have made efforts to approach that matter in a pragmatic manner through informal briefings by the Task Force to the General Assembly and through the dissemination of information. The draft resolution provides for the General Assembly to interact with the Task Force on a regular basis in order to receive briefings and reports, to assess the work accomplished and to offer policy guidance. I am confident that the dialogue between the General Assembly and the United

Nations system will continue to improve in future sessions.

It is also my pleasure to note that, in two years, at its sixty-fourth session, the General Assembly will examine the implementation of the Strategy and consider updating it to respond to changes. Indeed, that is an ongoing effort. We must continue to find means of cooperation, and we can use the Strategy as a reference point for embarking on such common efforts.

I am convinced that this General Assembly meeting will serve as an opportunity to present our national experiences and share best practices in countering terrorism in an integrated manner. Through the exchange of those experiences, we can identify priorities and areas where all of us can work together and add value. By finding gaps and identifying areas where further assistance is needed, we can build closer cooperation between Member States and the United Nations system.

Two years ago, the General Assembly assumed the responsibility for strengthening the Organization's response to terrorism by giving us a platform for furthering our common efforts. By implementing the Global Strategy, we will strengthen the United Nations and reassert the role of the General Assembly by making it capable not only of fulfilling our ideals and expectations, but also of delivering concrete results.

Throughout this session, I have emphasized the need for a new kind of internationalism that caters to a new kind of global society based on principled pragmatism and shared responsibility — a new way of thinking about our shared fate in a manner that reflects the complexities of contemporary human and economic relations, with the well-being of individuals and communities at its centre. We need a more active and coherent United Nations system and stronger engagement by all members of the General Assembly. The legitimacy and relevance of the Assembly depends above all on its ability to translate its decisions and commitments into practical actions.

Let us all demonstrate that the Strategy has brought us closer together in order to counter that scourge. It is only with strong resolve that we can achieve a safer world for all of us.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: Terrorism is heinous and insidious. It seeks to break spirits, to tear apart communities, to suffocate hope.

Terrorism is deeply personal. It kills our sons, daughters and mothers; our fathers, sisters and brothers. But we cannot let it destroy our families, including our United Nations family — staff members who are targeted as they feed the poor, protect the weak and empower the downtrodden.

On 18 December in Algiers, I saw with my own eyes the devastation left by the attack on our offices. I saw the horror in the eyes of survivors and the families of those killed, and I witnessed the bravery of those who went to the site immediately after the bombing and dug in the rubble with their bare hands, hoping to save their colleagues and friends.

I was overwhelmed and overcome by emotion. I will never forget the tears I shed with everyone that day. I brought back with me many searing impressions and memories. The flag that had flown outside our Algiers offices, now tattered and torn from the blast, is on display at our Geneva headquarters; and of course, the flag from the Canal Hotel in Baghdad hangs in the visitors' lobby here in New York. Both serve as emblems of our determination to reinvigorate our efforts to counter the scourge of terrorism.

Two years ago, the General Assembly took a courageous step and boldly, with unanimous voice, said "no more". One hundred and ninety-two Member States said that we can, we must and we will do more to protect our citizens, and do it together. Transcending geographic, political, cultural and religious divides, Member States drafted and adopted the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It is that historic document whose implementation we review today.

Since the Strategy's adoption, the commitment of the Member States has not wavered. Instead, it has strengthened and deepened. We have made much progress.

Two years ago, the effort to improve United Nations system coordination and coherence on counter-terrorism was still new. Today, United Nations entities are working together on a regular basis. Moreover, United Nations actors beyond those with explicit counter-terrorism-related mandates have become acutely conscious of the contributions that their efforts can and must bring to the fight.

We have come a long way, but we cannot stop now. We must intensify our efforts to implement the Strategy across the board. That is not a choice; it is a fundamental duty. We must be strategic, proactive and realistic. We must be guided by and comply with our obligations under international law, in particular human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law. By including those imperatives in the Strategy, Member States have created a comprehensive and forward-looking document.

As representatives know, the Strategy embodies a broad call to action. International, national, regional, subregional and civil society actors all have roles to play, but Member States must be the key drivers. National-level action is critical. States have proven extremely effective at marshalling the expertise and efforts needed to prevent and respond to terrorism. At the same time, national efforts alone are not sufficient. Not all States have the same capacities, and of course terrorism is a global, cross-border challenge. Multilateral cooperation is vital. That is precisely why the United Nations, and more specifically the General Assembly, our universal body, is so deeply involved.

Today, I urge Members to take multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation even further. Our action should be guided by three main principles.

First, we must be innovative in developing our tools. We must not shy away from non-traditional approaches to promoting security. Recent research has found that military force is rarely responsible for bringing an end to terrorist groups; in the majority of cases, other factors, such as police work or the adoption of non-violent political means, have proved more effective. Thus, as the General Assembly has already noted in its draft resolution, multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation should be undertaken in an integrated manner across the four pillars of the Strategy and across the necessary range of actors. We are developing that capacity within the United Nations system through the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. Our aim is to offer interested Member States the full range of United Nations support in a user-friendly manner. That is the next big step in the United Nations system's efforts on behalf of the Strategy.

Secondly, multilateral counter-terrorism efforts must be undertaken in partnership with regional and subregional organizations and with civil society. The United Nations system and Member States alike can do better in that regard by sharing information about the Strategy at all levels. When we meet in the future to review the implementation of the Strategy, United Nations field staff and national officials from all relevant ministries should join our discussion and share their experiences with us.

Thirdly, counter-terrorism efforts at the international level should leverage our comparative strengths. Much of the capacity and resources for counter-terrorism are found at the bilateral level, but bilateral actions may be insufficient to face the immensity of the needs and circumstances. The collective approach of the United Nations and the legitimacy of the Strategy give multilateral efforts a great advantage that we should maximize.

As we review our progress in the implementation of the Strategy, let us not forget that we are looking back in order to move forward. Where there have been gains, let us build on them. If there are frustrations, let us do more than vent. Let us not only review, but also recommit ourselves to implementation.

And let me be clear. When I say "let us", I do not exclude myself. Counter-terrorism has been among my top priorities as Secretary-General. Just as representatives gather here today to renew their commitment to the Strategy, so do I. Towards that end, I have been striving to institutionalize the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force within the Secretariat. I will also convene next week, here in New York, a symposium on supporting victims of terrorism. I invite all present here to participate and contribute.

It is precisely the victims of terrorism who remind us why we must further develop multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation and capacity. When we see pictures of steel contorted by a terrorist bomb, or worse, the mangled body of a child, it should remind us why political, religious and cultural differences must never drive a wedge between our shared commitment to end terrorism in all its forms, everywhere. As we are constantly and tragically reminded, the urgent need for which the Strategy was created has not faded. The Strategy was crafted not as an end in itself, but as a tool with which to fight an all-too-present plague. Let us together make its implementation an effort that outlasts our days at the United Nations. In that spirit, I wish all here a most productive meeting.

Mr. Delon (France) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and the Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this statement.

First of all, I should like to thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting and Ambassador Gert Rosenthal, whom you appointed facilitator for the drawing up of the draft resolution on the outcomes of the implementation review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/62/L.48), which has brought us together today. Your involvement in the preparation of our work is testament to your dedication, which will surely enable the successful completion of the review of the Strategy.

As stated in the European Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the European Council on 16 December 2005, terrorism poses a threat to all States and to all peoples. By attacking the innocent, it seriously threatens the security and values of democratic societies. Terrorism is criminal and unjustifiable regardless of the circumstances. That is why the European Union is working to bolster the emerging international consensus on the fight against terrorism and to consolidate and supplement existing international standards, beginning with those within the framework of the United Nations.

The adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy on 16 December 2005 was a major success in that respect. All States members of the General Assembly thereby demonstrated their ability to unite and to speak with one voice in the fight against terrorism. That unanimous position of the international community within the multilateral framework of the United Nations is necessary, since both conventional terrorism and nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical terrorism constitute a global threat that disregards borders.

Thus, the European Union once again commends the success that the adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy represents and reiterates its call to maintain the authority of the Strategy two years after its adoption and to reaffirm the four pillars upon which it rests. At the same time, the European Union encourages Member States that have not yet signed and ratified the 13 conventions and protocols of the United Nations that constitute the legal basis of the international counter-terrorism measures to do so.

Furthermore, the European Union calls for full implementation of all resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly on global counter-terrorism. The European Union also calls for a prompt conclusion to the negotiations of the comprehensive convention on international terrorism so as to complete the international counter-terrorism system.

The consensus on fighting terrorism must in no way undermine the obligations of States pursuant to their respective commitments to the protection of human rights, refugee law and international humanitarian law. Defending and protecting human rights for all and the primacy of the rule of law are essential to every aspect of the Strategy. In that respect, the Strategy recalls that "effective counter-terrorism measures and the protection of human rights are not conflicting goals, but complementary and mutually reinforcing" (*res. 60/288, annex, part IV*).

The review of the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy that has brought us together today goes beyond examining a simple declaration. By taking the form of a draft resolution accompanied by an action plan, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy strives to be operational and able to guide the actions of every actor in the international community. As an operational instrument, the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy naturally requires an implementation review. That review is all the more critical in that implementing the Strategy involves, for each of its four pillars, a variety of stakeholders, States, civil society, regional organizations, the United Nations and a range of tools. In that context, the European Union emphasizes the importance of stepping up counter-terrorism efforts on the basis of an integrated and comprehensive approach involving all stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and regional organizations.

At the State level, we note that much effort has been made, particularly as a result of technical assistance and international cooperation, which help to strengthen counter-terrorism measures. Channels of cooperation have been endorsed, in particular by the Counter-terrorism Committee established pursuant to

resolution 1373 (2001), its Executive Directorate and the technical assistance programmes of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. To illustrate that aspect, some States members of the European Union will speak today on their national initiatives and technical assistance projects with third States, which were set up in response to the adoption of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

At the regional level, several organizations have also taken initiatives to increase their capacity to combat terrorism in accordance with the United Nations Strategy. In that regard, the European Union has redoubled its efforts to implement fully the four pillars of the Global Strategy. The European Union's Counterterrorism Coordinator, Mr. Gilles de Kerchove, who will speak shortly to give a detailed description of the series of initiatives to eliminate the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, to prevent and fight terrorism, to enhance counter-terrorism capacity and to respect human rights.

The European Union welcomes the actions taken by the United Nations. As demonstrated by the Secretary-General's report of July 2008, entitled "United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: activities of the United Nations system in implementing the Strategy" (A/62/898), the United Nations has implemented several measures to allow for better coordination among its counter-terrorism bodies, with the result that they now function more efficiently.

Efforts should still be made so that the Assembly is kept better informed of that coordination work, including through increased interaction with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force that oversees them. For example, the Task Force could deliver biannual progress reports at the General Assembly. In addition, closer contact could be established between the Task Force and the relevant Security Council committees — the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Committees established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1540 (2004).

With regard to those challenges, we commend the work accomplished by the Task Force and the efforts referred to by the Secretary-General in his report on the activities of the United Nations system in implementing the Strategy to lend it the necessary administrative support. We are confident that it is possible to meet that goal and that the Task Force can receive the institutional status that it deserves in being accorded sufficient budgetary and staff resources to fulfil its mandate. In that regard, the European Union recognizes the efforts made by the Secretary-General to achieve that within the limits of the existing resources, as the Strategy originally stipulated.

Finally, in order to assess future efforts, the European Union supports the principle of re-examining implementation of the Strategy in the future and thus hopes that a review deadline will be set in the draft resolution that we shall adopt.

Please be assured that the European Union, as it has done in preparing for this meeting, seeks to participate constructively in discussions and to facilitate the adoption of a text that will uphold the authority of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Mr. De Kerchove will now make a presentation on the efforts undertaken by the European Union in that regard.

Mr. De Kerchove (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, and the French presidency of the Council of Ministers of the European Union (EU) for giving me the opportunity to briefly present the contributions of the EU as a whole to the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which was adopted by the Assembly in 2006. Obviously, there is not enough time to go into the details of the measures undertaken and policies pursued since 2006. I have made available to the Assembly a chart that highlights the various pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the specific measures undertaken by the EU. That document is available by the door to the Hall. After I briefly reiterate the principles on which the actions of the EU are based, I will illustrate them using the most recent and the most emblematic measures.

First, I will address the principles. Three principles guide the efforts of the EU. The first is to consider terrorism as a heinous crime that must be prevented, prosecuted and punished in accordance with the common rules and procedures of criminal law. The approach is therefore deliberately legal and judiciary. The EU is contributing, as I will demonstrate, to providing its member States with an array of appropriate legal tools in that area.

The second principle has to do with the EU preference for a multilateral approach, through support not only for the actions of the United Nations, the General Assembly and the Security Council in particular, but also for the actions of regional organizations such as the African Union or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The third principle is the central commitment of the EU to scrupulous respect for basic human rights and individual freedoms. The EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted by the European Council in December 2005, is articulated, as is the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, around four pillars: preventing radicalization; prosecuting the perpetrators of attacks; protecting borders and critical infrastructure; and responding to the aftermath of a major attack.

Allow me to quickly review those four pillars. First, the pillar on which we are increasingly working is the prevention of radicalization and recruitment. The EU has been working since 2004 to strike a new balance in its approach. Initially, I admit, our approach essentially had to do with repressive efforts. In trying to prevent radicalization and the move towards violence by young people living in Europe or outside of it, we must identify those factors that facilitate the process of radicalization, the factors that motivate the use of violence and structural factors that may fuel that complex process.

The EU has mobilized its academic community and funded various studies in that area. I admit that the matter is sensitive on many levels. It is, first of all, crucial to avoid associating terrorism with any specific religion. In addition, a number of policies, such as promoting intercultural or interfaith dialogue, are valuable in and of themselves, and would be greatly diminished if they were undertaken only because they help to prevent terrorism. Lastly, a number of policies remain within the competences of the member States. I refer in particular to access to quality jobs, education, housing and, in general, integration. That is why the EU seeks to identify the best practices in those areas and to recommend their adoption to its member States.

Among the latest measures adopted by the EU in terms of prevention, allow me to highlight a few. I am thinking in particular of the publication under way of a manual listing best practices to avoid radicalization in prisons. The European Police Office, the EU agency on police cooperation, has created a secure portal that provides analysis by intelligence and police services of Internet sites that incite crime and terrorism and contribute to radicalizing youth, in addition to a platform that brings together the cybercrimes detected by member States. I am also thinking here of the efforts to develop community police forces and local reintegration processes in order — and I think this is important — to develop a counter-discourse to discourage the co-opting of religion for ideological reasons. I am also thinking about the encouragement of intercultural dialogue. As representatives may know, the EU has decided to designate 2008 the year of intercultural dialogue, particularly through support for very specific projects in the field of education, in particular the education of the very young, and active support for the Alliance of Civilizations.

The second pillar is prosecution, which falls within the context of all European Union policies to streamline the European penal system. That involves first the application of the principle of mutual recognition, which allows for the rapid execution throughout the EU of pre-sentencing judicial decisions — the freezing of assets, arrest warrants and warrants to obtain evidence — and of final judicial decisions, such as asset confiscation and arrest warrants leading to imprisonment. Efforts are also being undertaken to harmonize the respective criminal codes of member States. In that connection, the Council of European Ministers adopted major legislation this year to expand the European definition of terrorism in order to cover incitement to commit terrorist acts — in particular through the use of the Internet — recruitment and training. A series of measures have also been taken to improve the gathering and sharing of information among all domestic security personnel — intelligence agencies, police, customs and judicial entities. I am thinking in particular here of police information, judicial information and information held by the private sector, which can also be extremely important to prosecution and investigation. Lastly, the European Community and Union have adopted all the necessary legislation for the implementation of the nine special recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering regarding the funding of terrorism. The challenge today is to implement those measures concretely and to improve cooperation between the intelligence community and financial institutions.

Moving quickly to the third pillar, before reaching my conclusion, 22 of 27 member States and two non-member States of the EU have decided to engage in the free circulation of persons and to remove controls at their shared borders. In the process of free circulation offered to our citizens, certain compensatory measures must be taken to enhance the security of travel documents, such as the use of biometric technology, and to establish large databases, such as the Visa Information System and the Schengen Information System. Visa policies must be harmonized, as must external border policies. A European external border agency, Frontex, was established to that end. Further measures which I will not discuss here are also under consideration. The EU has also adopted this year a plan of action to enhance the security of explosives and of critical transportation and energy infrastructure. Next year we hope to adopt a major plan to reduce the risk of nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical attacks.

Lastly, with regard to the fourth pillar, through a series of measures in the area of civilian protection, the European Union is working to strengthen the capacity of member States to respond to the effects of a major terrorist attack.

That is a very brief overview of some examples of recent measures by the European Union to implement the Global Strategy.

My intervention would not be complete if I failed to mention the efforts of the European Community and Union to assist other countries to resolve their conflicts, restore and maintain peace, stabilize democracy and the rule of law, and develop their economies. In that regard, I would like in particular to refer to the European Union's police and rule of law missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Palestinian territories and Guinea-Bissau. I should also like to refer to a series of development assistance measures, as well as to the Union's financing of programmes in more than 70 countries to combat terrorism and promote general political dialogue.

As the President has pointed out, the draft resolution that the General Assembly will adopt shortly underscores the specific role that regional organizations are called upon to play in the implementation of the Global Strategy. I apologize for taking so much time, but I do hope that what I have said illustrates for Member States the determination of the European Union to continue to contribute actively in that regard.

Mr. Amil (Pakistan): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the group of States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on the first biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

At the outset, the Group would like to express its appreciation for the efforts of Ambassador Gert Rosenthal of Guatemala, facilitator of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy review consultations, aimed at reaching a consensus draft resolution on the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

The Group reaffirms its strong condemnation of all acts and practices of terrorism and remains convinced that terrorism — irrespective of its motivation, objectives, forms and manifestations and committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes — can never be justified.

The Group also reaffirms that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group, and stresses the need to continue the ongoing efforts to promote a culture of peace, justice and human development; ethnic, national and religious tolerance; respect for all religions, religious values, beliefs and cultures; and prevent the defamation of religions. The Group is of the view that terrorism is itself a violation of human rights.

The Group supports a comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism that must address the root causes of terrorism, including the unlawful use of force, aggression, foreign occupation, festering international disputes, the denial of the right of peoples living under foreign occupation to self-determination, political and economic injustices, and political marginalization and alienation.

The Group reiterates the need to make a distinction between terrorism and the exercise of the legitimate right of peoples to resist foreign occupation, and would like to stress that that distinction is duly observed in international law, international humanitarian law, Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 46/51, which also endorse that position.

The Group reaffirms that the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy constitutes an

ongoing effort and is a living document that should be updated and examined regularly. The Group also reaffirms that the Counter-Terrorism Strategy should be implemented in all its aspects. The Group stresses that the implementation of the Strategy lies first and foremost in the hands of Member States.

The Group recalls that, to ensure State ownership of the Strategy, the participation of all Member States in the decision-making process for the implementation of the Strategy should be ensured. Periodic written reports and regular briefings by the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force on its coordination and coherence activities and an intergovernmental oversight mechanism developed through consensus on the part of all Member States will facilitate the achievement of that objective. The Group believes that the activities of the Task Force should be untied from its sources of funding. Those activities should be demand-driven instead of being donor-driven.

The Group stresses that the establishment of appropriate structures and the organization of events and activities related to the Strategy should be undertaken in a way that promotes consensus, respects given mandates, avoids politicization and addresses all aspects of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy on an equal footing.

The Group expresses its deep sympathy for the victims of all acts of terrorism, whether perpetrated by State or non-State actors, and for the victims of the implementation of counter-terrorism measures who suffer due to disregard for human rights and international humanitarian law.

The Group takes note of the Secretary-General's recent invitation to Member States to participate in the symposium on victims of terrorism. The Group believes that it would have been better if the symposium on victims of terrorism had been organized as a result of transparent and all-inclusive multilateral intergovernmental consultation.

The Group would like to stress the central role of the General Assembly in combating terrorism, as it is the only body at the level of the United Nations that enjoys universal membership.

The Group reiterates its support for the high-level conference to find solutions to the perennial issues related to international efforts to counter terrorism, and also underscores the need to develop a code of conduct for international efforts to combat terrorism.

The Group reaffirms its support for the proposal of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, to establish an international centre under the aegis of the United Nations to combat international terrorism.

Mr. Al-Murad (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the Arab Group, we would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting on the first review of the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which was adopted in September 2006. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/62/898) on this issue, which was prepared pursuant to resolution 60/288. We would also like to express our gratitude to the facilitator, Ambassador Gert Rosenthal of Guatemala, for his efforts in that regard.

The Arab Group attaches great importance to the efforts exerted to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as Arab States continue to be among the countries of the world that most suffer from terrorism. Hundreds of thousands of innocent citizens in the Arab world have lost their lives to terrorism.

The League of Arab States was a pioneer in putting forward an Arab strategy to combat terrorism, which the Council of Arab Foreign Ministers adopted in 1997. In 1998, the League also put forward a comprehensive Arab agreement to combat terrorism. That legal framework is now an important regional mechanism that complements the efforts made by the General Assembly in accordance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

The Arab States have already implemented many of the measures set out in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and a number of others are still in the implementation process. Furthermore, the Arab Group attaches great importance to all the measures set out in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, particularly those aimed at addressing the root causes of terrorism and the conditions and factors leading to its proliferation.

In that regard, the Arab Group reaffirms its consistent position that terrorism cannot be linked to any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group and emphasizes that everyone must abide by that principle, in accordance with the provisions of the

Strategy. Therefore, the Arab Group calls for greater dialogue, tolerance and understanding among civilizations, cultures, peoples and religions and for the criminalization of disrespect for and defamation of religions and the desecration of their symbols, since such acts serve to incite hate, which could lead to terrorism. In that context, the Arab Group commends the World Conference on Dialogue, held in Madrid, from 16 to 18 July 2008 under the auspices of His Majesty, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, and His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain.

The Arab Group refers to the fact that the Strategy contains no definitions of terrorism or State terrorism owing to the lack of an international agreement on such definitions, which could hamper international counter-terrorism efforts. In that connection, the Arab Group reaffirms the need to conclude the negotiations on a United Nations draft comprehensive convention against international terrorism that will include specific definitions of international terrorism and State terrorism and will distinguish between terrorism and the legitimate right of peoples to resist occupation and aggression, while taking into account that the killing of innocent civilians is not sanctioned by divine laws or by international or regional conventions.

The Arab Group believes it is crucial to ensure the success of the Strategy's review process, despite the apparent lack of a specific methodology in the preparations for the important meetings to be held in that regard. Thus we would like to make the following observations to help ensure a successful review process.

First, the Arab Group affirms the importance of comprehensive and non-selective follow-up to the implementation of the Strategy's provisions, as well as the central role that the General Assembly can play, as the most representative principal organ of the United Nations, in considering the issue of combating terrorism in all its aspects.

Secondly, the Arab Group reaffirms the need to fully comply with all United Nations counter-terrorism resolutions, using every available means, and to confront terrorism in all its forms and manifestations to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security.

Thirdly, the Arab Group welcomes the provisions of the Assembly's draft resolution on the coordination of the counter-terrorism activities of Member States with those of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, within their own mandates. That would enable Member States to play a greater role in directing policies and implementing the Strategy, as they bear the primary responsibility in that area, and to monitor the activities of the Task Force in a responsible and transparent manner.

Fourthly, we believe that establishing the Task Force within the Secretariat and equipping it with the necessary resources provide a good basis for an organized, constructive and integrated contribution to the efforts of Member States to attain the objectives of the Strategy.

Fifthly, the Arab Group would also like to reaffirm its support for the proposal, presented by His Majesty King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, that an international counter-terrorism centre be established under United Nations auspices.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour and an immense pleasure to address the General Assembly on behalf of the Group of African States on the happy occasion of the consideration of draft resolution A/62/L.48 on the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The African Group expresses its appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and congratulates the Secretary-General on his comprehensive report on the activities of the United Nations system in implementing the Strategy (A/62/898). We should also like to thank the facilitator, Ambassador Gert Rosenthal of Guatemala, for his excellent preparatory work.

In the light of the commendable activities undertaken on the continent, in particular by the African Union, the African Group would like to recall the important role that it played in the General Assembly's adoption, on 8 September 2006, of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The adoption of that instrument by all State Members of the Organization marked an important step in the launching of a coordinated, coherent and comprehensive fight against terrorism at the national, regional and global levels.

The African Group wishes to add that international terrorism represents an extremely grave

threat to the peace, security, stability and development of the continent and requires priority attention and a resolute response on the part of our peoples and Governments. It was in that context that African leaders committed themselves, together with the international community, to achieving the following outcomes: the adoption of the Dakar Declaration against Terrorism in 2001; the adoption, in Algiers on 14 July 1999, of the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism; the adoption, in 2002, of the Algiers Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa; the creation of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, which became operational on 13 October 2004; and the adoption that same year of the Protocol to the Algiers Convention. The Intergovernmental Action Group against Money-Laundering was established in West Africa to the same end.

While Member States bear the primary responsibility for implementing the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, we must also emphasize that, if it is to be fully successful, the Strategy must benefit from the mobilization of a regional and global partnership among all stakeholders and at all levels, including civil society and the private sector. Such a partnership should bring together in a coordinated manner Member States, United Nations entities, regional and subregional organizations and representatives of civil society.

The African Group welcomes in that regard the active, coordinated and coherent contribution of the United Nations system — particularly through its Departments, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, as well as the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force — to implementing the Strategy. The Group also welcomes the organization by the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the task forces supporting the other committees of the Security Council involved, of a series of workshops intended to draw the attention of Member States of West, Central and southern Africa to the provisions of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

The Group appreciates the convening from 2 to 4 April in Algiers by the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, in cooperation with the Government of Spain, of a seminar on counter-terrorism in North Africa. It also welcomes the seminar on counter-terrorism in Central Africa held in Brazzaville from 26 to 28 May. Such seminars show the determination of the international community, and especially of the leaders of Africa, to implement the Strategy, and deserve our attention.

The Group welcomes the entry into force in July 2007 of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, an important legal instrument in the service of the international community's solidarity struggle. We also strongly call for the adoption of a global counter-terrorism convention and urge Member States to accelerate the negotiation process to that end.

Political quarrels and differences should not hinder our commitment to combating that contemporary international scourge at its source. This is an opportunity for the Task Force to express its sympathy to the countries and innocent victims of terrorism in Africa and throughout the world, and to reiterate its condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Terrorism has become increasingly fearsome as it has adapted to globalization and become increasingly sophisticated. It has changed its methods and established increasingly closer links with other types of crime, such as drug trafficking, money-laundering and illicit trafficking in weapons, that are equally condemnable and dangerous to the stability of States. The success of any action to combat the scourge will require solidarity between all members of the international community, and will be measured in the number of lives saved and of terrorist acts thwarted. Such action requires tolerance, dialogue between civilizations and the acceptance of our differences in a community of shared interests. It will also require the settlement of conflicts that are tearing so many countries apart and solutions to development problems.

The African Group hopes that the biennial review of the Strategy will consolidate international cooperation in the implementation of essential measures contained in the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, such as the elimination of conditions conducive to the dissemination of terrorism, particularly poverty, social exclusion and marginalization; the prevention and suppression of terrorism; increasing the capacities of States and the role of the United Nations; and respect for the human

rights of all and for the rule of law as the critical foundation of counter-terrorism activity.

In that respect, the African Group, reiterating the requests of the African Union Peace and Security Council, appeals to the international community, including the United Nations, to provide the technical and financial assistance necessary to allow African States to strengthen their capacity to counter terrorism. It calls on the United Nations system and specialized agencies to provide the necessary support to allow the Commission of the African Union and its Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, based in Algiers, to implement the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

In conclusion, the African Group undertakes to make a positive contribution to the fullest success of our work.

Mr. Mohsen (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the Organization's efforts in implementing the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/62/898), and the facilitator for his efforts to facilitate the conclusion of the informal consultations on the draft resolution on reviewing the implementation of the Strategy. The draft resolution reaffirms the Strategy's importance and the need to update and develop the means to implement it in order to address changes and challenges the international community faces in its quest to combat terrorism. The draft also highlights the determination of Member States to take concrete action and measures at all levels to ensure the elimination of terrorism internationally, regionally and nationally.

The review of the Strategy requires an assessment of the progress achieved in its implementation and an evaluation of the obstacles impeding the achievement of its objectives. It requires the Member States, as the actors primarily responsible for implementing the Strategy, to make greater efforts, in cooperation and coordination among themselves, in order to succeed in their confrontation of that imminent danger, which threatens the stability of peoples and hinders their development and prosperity.

From that perspective, Egypt believes that the main factor for the success of the Strategy is the support of the United Nations Member States for its elements, and that we are all able to agree on that point. Nevertheless, none of the hoped-for results has been achieved within the past two years, which confirms the existence of shortcomings that must be corrected through the necessary action of the General Assembly.

Perhaps the most significant deficiency is the restriction of the membership of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force to certain mechanisms and bodies, some belonging to the Secretariat and others outside it, such as INTERPOL, for instance. Egypt stresses that the key factor for the success of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and United Nations efforts in that area must be a Task Force that includes representatives of the States members of the General Assembly, with the assistance of the Secretariat.

While recognizing the importance of the Secretariat's efforts, the delegation of Egypt reaffirms that the United Nations activities, including those of the Task Force, complement the efforts of Member States, which are the primary and ultimate point of reference in that regard. Furthermore, it is important that the Task Force commit itself to the various aspects of the Strategy, since its main role is to ensure the coordination and coherence of efforts of the bodies operating within the United Nations system to combat terrorism.

Henceforth the Task Force should focus on improving the performance of the United Nations by avoiding duplication in the implementation of mandates and ensuring that the focus of its cooperation with the Security Council's committees be confined to the security aspects, and not on any other matter falling within the competence of the General Assembly. There is no doubt that this issue will not be resolved unless States participate in steering and directing the work of the Task Force.

In that context and in light of the importance of the commitment of the Task Force to the elements of the Strategy, the delegation of Egypt stresses that it is unnecessary to expand the establishment of working groups on the relevant issues within the Task Force or to use terms that Member States have rejected ever since the commencement of negotiations on the Strategy, such as "radicalism and extremism". Those working groups should focus on their tasks, as entrusted by the United Nations Member States, on the four pillars of the Strategy, which must be implemented in parallel.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Hence, it is important to point out that the Task Force should avoid selectivity in implementing the pillars of the Strategy. In that regard, we question the reason behind the focus on certain topics and not on others, such as radicalization and the victims of terrorism. We also question the usefulness of the preparation, by the working group on preventing and resolving conflicts, of guidelines on combating terrorism to be used by peacekeepers and representatives of the Secretary-General in the settlement of disputes or on ending situations of foreign occupation and other conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. We question in particular the perception that addressing such conditions requires the genuine political will of Member States and the building of the capacity of countries to confront them and not agreed-upon guidelines, especially when those principles have been previously approved by the international community in the United Nations Charter.

Although the delegation of Egypt supports providing the Task Force with the necessary financial resources from the budget of the Organization, we would also like to emphasize that that issue is directly linked to the participation of Member States in the efforts to ensure compliance with the mandate to implement the Strategy through their involvement in those activities. That will allow the Task Force to benefit from the experiences of Member States in its efforts to combat terrorism.

In that regard, I should like briefly to refer to the organization of seminars and workshops on the implementation of the Strategy. The delegation of Egypt hopes that such seminars will take place in a more transparent manner that avoids selectivity and politicization. In that context, I should like to underscore that, in connection with the symposium on the victims of terrorism to be held at the United Nations, and despite Egypt's total support and sympathy for victims, holding a symposium for the victims of terrorism while ignoring other victims such as those of foreign occupation, humanitarian disasters, crises and violations of international humanitarian law raises several questions. In addition, in the absence of a uniform agreed legal definition of terrorism, focusing on victims of terrorism serves to politicize the issue instead of dealing with its humanitarian aspects and ensuring that those victims are also cared for. I therefore reiterate the need to hold seminars only after fully consulting with Member States, instead of in isolation, and with financing from the Organization's budget, rather than external financing provided by States with a view to holding seminars to address specific issues.

With regard to cooperation between the United Nations, regional organizations and civil society to implement the Strategy, the delegation of Egypt appreciates such cooperation and attaches importance to strengthening it.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that the draft resolution should include a mechanism for a periodic review of the Strategy similar to the one provided for in resolution 60/288, which was adopted in 2006. The General Assembly should undertake periodic follow-ups of the Strategy in order to evaluate the success in its implementation.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that, despite the observations I have made on the draft resolution, the adoption of a consensus draft resolution on the review of the implementation of the Strategy would significantly highlight the unity of the international community in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including State terrorism. That will contribute both to the success of the Strategy and to international efforts to prevent all forms of terrorism. We have therefore agreed to join the consensus on the draft resolution. We also hope that the Secretariat will adopt a positive attitude in responding to the demands of Member States.

Mr. Alrashidi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank the President for the statement he made regarding the first review of the Strategy. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/62/898) and for his efforts in this regard.

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the member countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, as well as with the one on behalf of the members of the League of Arab States.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been the target and victim of terrorist attacks. My country has long worked to combat that dangerous scourge and continues to take the necessary steps to counter it. We have achieved concrete results on several levels.

At the local level, the competent authorities in the area of counter-terrorism have put in place several

measures to put an end to terrorism. They have been proactive in preventing criminal acts and in ensuring that their strategy to fight them was successful. The goal of that strategy was to dry up sources of financing for terrorism and to combat terrorists at the levels of intelligence and security. The counter-terrorism authorities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have made combating terrorism a priority, as well as a subject of study in various university and college curriculums throughout the Kingdom.

I must also not fail to refer to successful programmes that provide counselling and rehabilitation services to young people who have been misguided by terrorist ideas. Those programmes have been very successful in combating this dangerous scourge and provide an example from which other countries can benefit.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has repeatedly reaffirmed at numerous regional and international forums its desire to join international counter-terrorism efforts and to contribute to collective international measures to address the root causes of terrorism. In line with our ongoing and consistent policies against international terrorism and those who commit it, my country was among the first States to accede to the majority of international counter-terrorism conventions. Those include the counter-terrorism conventions and agreements of the Gulf Cooperation Council, that of the League of Arab States, which was adopted in 1989, and of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

At the international level, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has also become a party to United Nations conventions on terrorism. In February 2005, we hosted an international conference on counter-terrorism at our capital, Riyadh. Some 60 States and many international and regional organizations participated in the conference, which adopted several recommendations. Those included a prominent proposal calling on King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to establish an international counter-terrorism centre under the aegis of the United Nations. That proposal enjoyed broad support from the international community and was subsequently adopted by a number of international bodies, including summits of the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as the Arab-Latin Summit.

In that context, we hope that this meeting of the General Assembly will adopt the proposal made by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, to establish an international counter-terrorism centre under the auspices of the United Nations in order to link national and regional centres through a common database. That would make it possible to quickly track and counter the actions of terrorists and their organizations. The centre would also be mandated to support the voluntary exchange and transfer of needed counter-terrorism technologies and training programmes, as well as of expertise and coordination related to the drafting of legislation.

In this context the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reaffirms its commitment to supporting and helping the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, because terrorism is no longer a phenomenon linked to a specific religion, people or ethnic group. It has become an international phenomenon and thus poses a danger to everyone. Hence there is a need for international efforts to contain it and counter it effectively and thoroughly, with a sense of responsibility, seriousness and fairness, through international actions agreed upon within the framework of the United Nations. Thus, we can put an end to terrorism, save innocent lives and safeguard the sovereignty and stability of States and the security, safety and prosperity of all peoples.

Mr. İlkin (Turkey): Turkey aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of France on behalf of the European Union. I shall therefore limit myself to the following points.

First of all, it is a great pleasure for me to address the General Assembly on this very important issue. The informal meeting of the General Assembly held on 4 December 2007 — one of whose sessions I had the honour to chair — was a useful and informative midterm stock-taking exercise on the progress made in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by Member States and the United Nations. In that regard, we look forward to hearing more today about the measures taken within the framework of the Strategy and about how we can further improve and develop the implementation of the Strategy.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General for their opening remarks. In

addition, I wish to thank the facilitator, Ambassador Gert Rosenthal of Guatemala, for his unrelenting efforts to help achieve an agreement on the outcome document for the present session.

Two years ago, the General Assembly took a historic step by adopting the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and we duly recognize that landmark development. However, we also recognize the fact that the overall success of the Strategy will be judged in terms of concrete results. For that reason, we sincerely call upon all members of the international community to continue to contribute to the full and effective implementation of the Strategy.

Turkey, for its part, is committed to making every effort in that direction. For instance, in parallel to our national endeavours, we served as a sponsor of the International Process on Global Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, whose focus was to assess the overall contributions of the United Nations to the fight against terrorism and to provide support for the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

As members may be aware, several workshops were organized within the context of the International Process, and their results have already been shared with representatives. Nevertheless, I would like very briefly to highlight one of the issues that was discussed in depth during the workshop held in Antalya, Turkey, and reflected in the final document of the Process, namely, international legal cooperation on terrorism.

In that regard, we are of the view that the idea put forward in the final document concerning the need to promote greater awareness of the problems impeding the implementation of the principle "extradite or prosecute" merits greater consideration. Current practice in that area is by no means in line with the letter or the spirit of the Strategy. We hope that our discussions today will help us to identify ways and means to overcome the obstacles in the application of that important principle.

We can begin to speak about the success of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy only if it is implemented by all stakeholders, including Member States, the United Nations and other relevant international, regional and subregional organizations, and if it is implemented in an integrated manner and in all its aspects.

The recent report of the Secretary-General (A/62/898) presents highlights of the efforts within the United Nations system in that direction. His continued interest in and guidance aimed at the effective implementation of the Strategy deserve the utmost praise. This also applies to all his collaborators dealing directly or indirectly with the issue of terrorism. However, I cannot say the same for the Department of Public Information (DPI).

Just two months ago, a photographic exhibition took place in this building that, unfortunately, included pictures of the members of a terrorist organization targeting Turkey. That terrorist organization has been declared as such by many countries and institutions, including the European Union. I should also underline that its terrorist nature is recognized by the Secretariat. Therefore, one cannot help but ask why and how those photos came to be displayed under the roof of the United Nations, which holds a central place in our counter-terrorism efforts. We raised this matter with the Department. Unfortunately, it declined to take any action on the issue, citing a routine disclaimer posted at the exhibition, which denies endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations of the contents of any exhibition. However, were the disclaimer sufficient, there would be no need to regulate the contents of the exhibitions displayed by DPI at United Nations Headquarters, as is always done.

We believe that, on that particular occasion, the DPI not only failed to carry out its responsibility to oversee the aims, purposes and principles of the United Nations, which include the fight against terrorism; ultimately — although, I am sure, unintentionally — it also provided a terrorist organization with a unique opportunity to reach out to the United Nations community in this building.

I am aware that our meeting today is aimed first and foremost at sharing best practices on the implementation of the Strategy. Nevertheless, lessons can also be drawn from other practices such as the one in question. That is precisely why I have brought up that unfortunate incident and wanted to share our views on it with the Assembly. That having been said, it is my sincere hope and expectation that our discussions today will strengthen our collective resolve and our efforts to eradicate the scourge of terrorism once and for all.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to welcome the Secretary-

General's presence this morning as we begin our work, which attests to his interest in the subject before us. I should also like to thank President Kerim for having convened this meeting on the first review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In addition, I should like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Gert Rosenthal of Guatemala for his efforts and his patience throughout the negotiations process on draft resolution A/62/L.48.

My delegation subscribes to the statements made by the representative of Pakistan on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and by the representative of Guinea on behalf of the Group of African States.

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy that we are reviewing today is the outcome of a long-term effort of the General Assembly, undertaken since the statement delivered by the Secretary-General in Madrid in March 2005. The need for the Strategy was also reiterated by our heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit. The international community in fact needed, given the lack of a general convention on terrorism, to agree on a consensus-based road map to address terrorism together and give robust impetus to collectively agreed efforts in that respect. The outcome is considerable and nuanced, and must be preserved. That said, the Strategy is not a document that is set in stone. It needs to be periodically revisited in order to be adapted to emerging developments and needs.

Algeria welcomed the adoption of the Strategy and has sought to ensure its national implementation. It took part in the process launched by a number of Member States — which I take this opportunity to commend — in order to consider the best ways to implement the Strategy, help publicize and better understand its provisions, and prepare for its review.

Furthermore, my country, with the relevant working groups of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, has undertaken a fruitful process of cooperation and dialogue by sharing its experience in the fight against extremism and against incitement of acts of terrorism, particularly through the use of the Internet. The experience of a number of Algerians who have renounced terrorism has also been examined by the working group of the Task Force tasked with that matter.

In addition, the Government of Algeria encouraged and sponsored the holding in Algiers of the first international workshop on victims of terrorism, held in April 2008. That was an opportunity for a number of officials, experts and stakeholders from civil society to share their experience in terms of assistance and of providing psychological and social care for the victims of terrorism.

Where are we now in terms of the implementation of the Strategy at the international level? The Task Force, which is charged with coordinating the actions of the United Nations system in the fight against counter-terrorism, has set up thematic groups to identify the main outlines of the Strategy. However, a certain ambiguity seems to have marked the implementation of the mandate of the Task Force, in particular because of the selective approach that it has adopted.

The ultimate goal of the review of the Strategy is to highlight the importance of full implementation of its provisions and its potential updating. We have seen that particular attention has been paid to the second and third pillars, to the detriment of the first and fourth. That selective approach has damaged the integrity of the Strategy and does not encourage ownership by Member States, which is key to the success of the Strategy.

Another important element that we would like to highlight, and which draft resolution A/62/L.48 has not been able to address, is the necessary human and material means for the Task Force. Indeed, the Task Force needs more budget resources to be able to forgo voluntary contributions by States and attempts to influence implementation.

Lastly, my delegation would underscore the importance for the Task Force to undertake a process of cooperation with regional counter-terrorism bodies. In that regard, the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, which is based in Algiers, is the appropriate counterpart at the African level. The Centre has undertaken, together with European partners in particular, an ambitious initiative aimed at establishing an African database, which would be of great use in its ongoing mission. My delegation encourages any initiative of the Task Force in support of the African Centre, which could provide valuable support to the process of implementing the Strategy.

We could never place too much importance on the commitment of Member States in the process of Strategy implementation, which is at the heart of the draft resolution on the review of the Strategy. As important as the mandate of the Task Force may be, it does not directly obligate Member States, which are free to implement the Strategy or not. That is due to the voluntary nature of the measures provided for in the plan of action, but also, I believe, to the discretion left to Member States in terms of taking specific actions based on its provisions. Follow-up vis-à-vis Member States has indeed not been planned, as it has for the 24 United Nations bodies system that make up the Task Force. By way of comparison, the Security Council has subsidiary bodies that are charged with following up with Member States with regard to their implementation of the various resolutions on counter-terrorism. Indeed, Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter are binding for Member States, but nothing in the Charter prevents the General Assembly from providing follow-up to its decisions in such a sensitive area.

The Strategy continues to be an ongoing effort, and is clearly one that can be perfected. As a result, we now need to begin to prepare for dealing with the institutional issues and others as we look to the next biannual review of the Strategy.

Mr. Suda (Japan): On behalf of my Government, I would like to express our deep gratitude for the leadership provided by President Kerim in the discussion on counter-terrorism. I would also like to express our deep appreciation for the efforts made by the Secretary-General in this area. Our appreciation also goes to Ambassador Rosenthal of Guatemala for his extraordinary contribution in facilitating the informal consultations on the outcome of the plenary meeting.

As we all recognize, combating terrorism is a complex and challenging task for the international community that requires enduring engagement and a comprehensive approach. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the Assembly two years ago provides us with the fundamental basis for our cooperation. It reaffirms the strong will of all Member States to combat terrorism. It also provides significant guidance for concrete actions to be taken by Member States, the United Nations system and other regional and international bodies.

In the past two years, all stakeholders have made serious efforts to take the necessary measures to implement the Strategy and, as a result, substantial progress has been made. It is an opportune time, therefore, to examine the implementation status of the Strategy and discuss how to further strengthen our counter-terrorism efforts. Japan also welcomes the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations system in implementing the Strategy (A/62/898).

The four pillars identified in the Strategy are all indispensable elements of counter-terrorism. To effectively prevent and combat terrorism, we need to cooperate on all of them. All stakeholders have their respective roles to play, but there is no need to reiterate that Member States have the primary responsibility for taking the necessary actions within their capacity.

Before and after the adoption of the Strategy, Japan has been actively engaged in combating terrorism nationally and internationally. Allow me to outline our recent activities in relation to the implementation of the Strategy.

Japan believes that it is essentially important, in the medium and long term, to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. Those include problems of good governance, the rule of law, education and poverty. Japan is cooperating in numerous countries to build law enforcement capacity, support good governance self-help efforts and assist with the improvement of legal systems and socio-economic infrastructure. We are also promoting several programmes to encourage dialogue among civilizations and religions. Furthermore, we are looking into providing useful support to local areas that are seriously affected by poverty and vulnerable to violent extremism. Assistance in the areas of education and other community needs in such vulnerable areas could help to restore sound communities that are free from the influence of terrorists.

With regard to measures to prevent and combat terrorism, Japan has undertaken a wide range of domestic as well as international measures. For instance, last year we introduced a biometric identification system at our immigration control points, which has proved to be very effective. We are taking numerous steps in response to the Secure and Facilitated International Travel Initiative, which was agreed at the G8 summit in 2004. Needless to say, Japan has been

taking all the necessary steps to fully implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, including those relating to freezing assets and deportation.

With regard to international conventions and protocols against terrorism, Japan has already ratified 13 conventions and protocols, including the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Furthermore, in order to encourage other countries to become party to those conventions, since 2003 Japan has hosted an annual seminar on the promotion of accession to international counter-terrorism conventions and protocols. That extremely productive seminar includes the participation of countries of the Asia-Pacific region and is held with significant help from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Terrorism Prevention Branch.

Our cooperation in the area of capacity-building ranges from technical assistance to grants of equipment, and from law enforcement to border control and transport security. Besides bilateral cooperation, Japan has been actively engaged in capacity-building with such regional frameworks as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, and has developed numerous concrete projects. In addition, since assuming the presidency of the G8 this year, we have worked to achieve closer coordination between the Counter-Terrorism Action Group (CTAG) and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) by matching the specific needs identified by recipient countries with the available resources of each CTAG member country.

Japan also welcomed the initiative of Switzerland to set up an international process of discussion on global counter-terrorism cooperation. Japan hosted one of those workshops in Tokyo in June of this year. It was a widely shared belief at the workshop that close coordination between United Nations agencies and regional organizations and between traditional and non-traditional actors was essential to the effectiveness of assistance in the area of capacity-building.

We are all in support of the United Nations playing a central role in the international fight against terrorism. While every Member State should continue to contribute to our joint effort with its resources, for its part we expect the United Nations to fully mobilize its organizational strength, variety of resources and expertise. In that respect, I would like to make a few points.

First, the roles and activities of the main United Nations actors in the area of counter-terrorism — such as CTED, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and UNODC — should not overlap, but rather complement each other, if they are to make the most of their limited capacities and resources.

Secondly, we should seek out potential areas of cooperation and information sharing with other United Nations bodies and agencies, even if their mandates are not directly related to counter-terrorism, as the comprehensive approach we have adopted under the Strategy needs to address a wide range of issues, such as poverty, education, culture and human rights.

Thirdly, to achieve those ends, the Task Force should play the central role in information sharing and concentrate on its core mandate of coordinating the activities of the different United Nations organs concerned.

In conclusion, I would like to stress again that the primary responsibility for implementing the Strategy rests with Member States. Japan is determined to continue its fight against terrorism and prepared to contribute to further discussion on our unified effort to implement the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy of the United Nations.

Mr. Davide (Philippines): The full text of my statement will be circulated among members. Given the time constraints, I shall abbreviate some portions of it.

The Philippines welcomes this opportunity to speak before the General Assembly on the review of the progress made in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We would like to congratulate and commend Ambassador Gert Rosenthal of Guatemala on his wisdom and dedication, as well as his able staff for facilitating the discussions, that finally produced an outcome document in the form of a draft resolution. Undoubtedly, it will be an important decision for Member States to adopt that draft resolution by consensus, following the model of consensual adoption in connection with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

The Philippines has consistently maintained that the United Nations must remain at the forefront in combating international terrorism. United Nations agencies must now decisively facilitate international

cooperation and coordination efforts in that regard based on the four-pillar foundation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Those tasks must create a seamless web of activities aimed at addressing international terrorism and maintaining the rule of law. I need not emphasize that the tasks are formidable and demand courage and political will.

Even as we continue to cooperate and coordinate our efforts in the international arena in that regard, we must also maintain the requisite attention and vigilance within our borders to address the elements and conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and to hold terrorism in check before it spreads its wickedness, violence, iniquity and immorality and imposes a reign of fear, destruction and death.

In implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the Philippines has been guided by the four pillars and has implemented each of them using three main tools: first, a comprehensive political, social and economic package for peace and security; secondly, a comprehensive legal package that brings terrorists to justice, plugs the loopholes in the legal system and ensures the protection of human rights; and, thirdly, a broad alliance for technical support, cooperation and preparedness.

The Philippines is convinced that terrorism takes root in conditions of poverty and injustice and the debasing of human dignity, which aggravate marginalization. Poverty spawns terrorism, and the areas where extreme poverty exists serve as fertile grounds for terrorist leaders, financiers and agents to spread their terrorist agenda. Political and socio-economic marginalization rooted in intolerance and misunderstanding have long been recognized as obstacles to development efforts and can lead to extremism and terrorism.

In the experience of the Philippines, economic development, social justice, the protection of human rights and political and judicial reforms are powerful instruments against extremism and terrorism. Aware of that, the Constitution of the Philippines explicitly declares as a policy the promotion of a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services and promote full employment, a rising standard of living and an improved quality of life for all. Also enshrined in the Constitution is a separate article on social justice and human rights that directs the Congress to give the highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the rights of all the people to human dignity and reduce social, economic and political inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power for the common good. The Philippine Congress has enacted laws to implement those constitutional mandates.

Judicial reforms in the Philippines include measures to address marginalization, such as providing effective and efficient access to justice for the poor. I respectfully submit, as I did many times before when I was Chief Justice of the Philippines, that when each State makes its courts accessible to all, it goes a long way towards addressing the problem of marginalization and stripping all would-be terrorists of the vestiges of moral entitlement and legitimacy.

Our peace negotiations in conflict-ridden areas in the southern Philippines are reinforced by counter-terrorism and conflict-management tools that aim at separating insurgents from terrorists. We are all aware that terrorists thrive on the acts of insurgents, fueling extremism to disastrous levels. By separating them, the Philippines has addressed the political grievances and issues of marginalization without giving into the terrorists.

In another current front, the Philippine Government and civil society have worked together to address those problems through interfaith and intercultural dialogue and understanding. More concretely, to address terrorism head-on, in July of last year the Congress of the Philippines enacted the Human Security Act of 2007. The Act defines and penalizes two crimes: terrorism and conspiracy to commit terrorism. The Act declares it to be the policy of the Philippines to protect life, liberty and property from acts of terrorism, to condemn terrorism as inimical and dangerous to the national security of the country and to the welfare of the people, and to make terrorism a crime against the Filipino people, against humanity and against the law of nations.

The Act also ensures that, even as the State has the right to extirpate terrorism, it shall nevertheless continue to uphold the basic rights and fundamental liberties of the people. It proclaims that "respect for human rights shall be absolute and protected at all times". It calls for a comprehensive approach against

terrorism that includes political, economic, social, legal and even diplomatic means.

The Philippines has also undertaken a continuing programme of bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the field of capacity-building and technical training and preparedness in combating terrorism. It has long-standing commitments on the training on law enforcement, customs clearance and border control with its neighbours in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as Japan and South Korea, in the wider Asia-Pacific region with Australia and New Zealand, and with Canada, the United States and the Governments of the European Union.

The Philippines spearheaded the establishment of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Counter-Terrorism Task Force, in an effort to secure the Asia-Pacific region from terrorist acts. Closer to home, the Philippines has joined forces with the other ASEAN member States in adopting a convention on terrorism that calls for greater cooperation among ASEAN member States in combating all acts of terror. Those counter-terrorism efforts in the bilateral and multilateral levels aim at securing the Philippines' maritime borders, trade, aviation, remittances and cross-border financial transactions.

The Philippines is honoured to share with the General Assembly information on the measures it has undertaken thus far to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Once again, the United Nations is confronting a phenomenon of transnational character: terrorism. We could debate how to define it, but we all understand that no cause, however legitimate, justifies the use of indiscriminate violence against innocent civilians in order to coerce societies and Governments. We reject terrorism and must combat it at the level of every State as well as through regional and international cooperation. That is what we acknowledged two years ago in adopting the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and that is what we are doing today as we meet to assess the implementation of the steps called for in the Strategy and to give new impetus to the Strategy in the years ahead.

In that regard, given its very nature and universal character, the General Assembly is the appropriate intergovernmental forum to address terrorism. The focus must therefore not be on the individual threat to a single country, but rather on a concerted effort by all countries in the face of the scourge. However, the relevance of the Strategy depends on its implementation, for which Member States are primarily responsible. This review therefore provides us with an opportunity to evaluate our own efforts, learn from them and find additional ways of assisting Members in implementing the Strategy.

My delegation is grateful to the Secretary-General for the report contained in document A/62/898, which helps us to mobilize and to evaluate the worthwhile initiatives undertaken by the United Nations system.

We support the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, which has proven its capacity for coordination and efficiency in guiding the system. We have confidence in its work and congratulate Mr. Robert Orr and his team for their achievements to date despite the budgetary constraints that the Task Force has encountered. We call on the Secretary-General to address those constraints in the next budgetary cycle so that the Task Force can fully carry out its work.

Every State, regardless of the region in which it is situated, be it big or small, strong or weak, is vulnerable to terrorism and its consequences. Given its geographic location, Guatemala is a transit point for the traffic in drugs; which in turn results in associated activities, such as the traffic in small arms and light weapons, the traffic in human beings and transnational organized crime. Against the backdrop of extreme poverty, those phenomena put us at real risk of terrorist acts. In fact, in its 2007 report on crime in Central America, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime warned that we should not underestimate potential links and interrelationships between organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism.

My Government has mobilized to put an end to those threats, thereby assuming its primary responsibility for ensuring public order and security in a democratic framework. We have also promoted regional cooperation, first at the level of our own Central American subregion and, secondly, at the level of the hemisphere. Through the Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations has helped us to develop anti-terrorism legislation in an effort to effectively implement global instruments to combat that

phenomenon. I should now like to refer to some of the main efforts we have undertaken to confront terrorism.

First, our current efforts are focused on incorporating into our national legislation the anti-terrorism provisions contained in international conventions. To date, we have ratified 10 of the 12 global instruments, as well as the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism. Six international instruments are currently pending ratification. I should also mention that, on 5 November 2007, my country's Congress ratified the Protocol to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf. We have also adopted a law to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorism, as well as a new law to regulate the process of extradition. Congressional committees are currently considering a draft law on international terrorism.

Secondly, the Government has established a national security and cybercrime prevention team, with a view to setting up a national cybercrime prevention centre. The team is in the process of being incorporated into the national secretariat for science and technology. To that end, in March 2008, the telecommunications authority, the Foreign Ministry and the Organization of American States held a regional capacity-building workshop at which more than 10 international experts and 40 specialists from the region of the Central American Integration System (SICA) participated. With the support of the Ministry for Public Affairs, Governance and Administration, we have developed a legal profile for cybercrimes with a view to developing a legal framework in that regard.

Thirdly, I am pleased to inform the Assembly that SICA member States are working with Mexico to develop a security strategy for Central America and Mexico to comprehensively orchestrate the joint security efforts of the countries of the region, in line with their own legal arrangements. Among the specific objectives of the strategy will be to integrate the various efforts of the region in the area of security, to facilitate coordination and the exchange of information and experiences, and to identify and manage financial and information resources required by security agencies.

Lastly, no strategy can fail to scrupulously respect human rights and the rule of law. We reiterate our absolute adherence to due process and acknowledge the efforts of the Security Council, especially its work this year to adapt its sanctions to conform with the law, in order to improve the effectiveness and transparency of United Nations sanctions. In that regard, we also welcome the dialogue that has been established between the Security Council, its subsidiary bodies and competent bodies for the promotion and protection of human rights. We urge that those links be strengthened.

In closing, combating organized crime, drug trafficking, the illicit trade in weapons, the fight against terrorism and the strengthening of mechanisms for the exchange of information are priority areas of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and are also closely linked to terrorism and its root causes.

This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We believe it timely to recall that event, which has in effect served to guide multilateral efforts in maintaining international peace and security while promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Mr. Chávez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): On 8 September 2006, 192 States joined together in the General Assembly to support the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and committed themselves to adopting concrete measures to address terrorism in all its aspects. Two years later, we are meeting again to reaffirm the Strategy and, above all, to evaluate its implementation, as both the United Nations and Member States must make ongoing efforts at the national and international levels to implement the Strategy. Now that the Strategy has been in force for two years, we can make a preliminary assessment that serves to reaffirm our beliefs and better orient our efforts in the future.

In that regard, we must emphasize that the phenomenon of terrorism exists at the international level and affects many countries at the national level. We must therefore preserve the Strategy's comprehensive focus on both levels. We urge international mechanisms, especially those established by the Security Council, to take that dual perspective into account and to address it in a balanced manner.

Thus, terrorism must be fought at the global level; it must involve States, regional and global organizations, and civil society. In that regard, cooperation between the different levels must be wide-

ranging and focused on combating all manifestations of terrorism and on strengthening national capacity and international judicial cooperation with regard to extradition.

Thus, States must adhere to international counter-terrorism instruments. The Strategy's plan of action urges States that are not yet parties to the anti-terrorism conventions and protocols to become so and to ensure their effective integration into national legislation.

However, other efforts must also be made, such as the institutionalization of the Task Force by the Secretary-General, in keeping with the provisions of the Strategy, so as to ensure the coordination and consistency of counter-terrorism efforts within the United Nations system. We are pleased that that pending task is to be accomplished.

At the regional level, the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, of which Peru is Chair this year, has supported the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy with mobilized resources, exchange of information and specialized knowledge, and by encouraging the establishment and consolidation of national systems of support for victims. We encourage other regional mechanisms to replicate that positive experience.

Those actions at the international level also call for effective and committed national measures. Thus, Peru has drawn up policy guidelines for the period 2007-2011 to fight terrorism head on. The Government of Peru has also made significant efforts to prevent, detect and punish unlawful activities linked to drug trafficking, money-laundering, arms trafficking, abductions and other such crimes. Peru has also hosted various regional meetings intended to enhance the coordination of anti-terrorist activities, particularly through the exchange of information and the training of experts.

Peru believes that the efforts undertaken at the national level, in conjunction with international cooperation, constitute the best means to counter the scourge. Thus, Peru is firmly committed to the Strategy and will continue to do all it can to ensure its success through its implementation at the national, regional and international level.

We should like to conclude by restating our commitment to the Strategy at this time, reflected in our support for the draft resolution to be presented by the facilitator, Ambassador Gert Rosenthal of Guatemala, whom we thank for his work and congratulate on his achievements.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): The adoption of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by the General Assembly two years ago was an important step in international efforts to deal with the issue of terrorism. The value of the Strategy lies in its four pillars, which establish a broad framework for international action, from tackling the conditions conducive to terrorism to dealing with such problems as terrorist financing. The United Kingdom welcomes such a comprehensive approach, which recognizes that terrorism is a complex phenomenon requiring a multifaceted response.

The Global Strategy was agreed among 192 Member States and represents our common approach to tackling the phenomenon of terrorism and its causes. Terrorist organizations are not interested in the peaceful resolution of conflicts or the eradication of poverty. They pursue their own narrow goals, using violence freely against civilians, and often aim to maximize casualties. Our answer is the unity represented in the Strategy and close collaboration in fulfilling the Strategy's objectives. The United Kingdom is cooperating with many of the Member States represented in this Hall to implement the actions contained in the Strategy and will continue to do so.

It is not just Member States that are taking action; the United Nations system is, too. It has extensive expertise in dealing with the terrorist phenomenon and many resources to back it up. We need system-wide coherence in tackling terrorism, as much as we do in addressing development or climate change, and we are making progress.

The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force has a crucial role to play, and we welcome the report of the Secretary-General (A/62/898) describing many of the important initiatives being undertaken by its members. A few examples highlight the diversity of work under way. Task Force members are addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism through conferences, UNESCO-sponsored youth events that promote a future without terrorism, and the work of United Nations programmes and agencies in promoting the rule of law.

We have also seen real progress in preventing and combating terrorism. The International Civil Aviation

Organization has approved additional airline security guidelines, and the International Maritime Organization is developing instruments and standards to help protect maritime transport from terrorist attacks. Work by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund on combating terrorist financing has continued to adapt as the technologies to deliver financial services develop. Task Force members have also focused on capacity-building in fields as diverse as assistance with nuclear security from the International Atomic Energy Agency to efforts on law enforcement by INTERPOL or work by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute on witness protection.

That wide array of activity highlights the challenge and importance of bringing coherence to the United Nations system, and we welcome the Secretary-General's commitment to address the staffing issues that face the Task Force.

The Security Council also needs to play its role in achieving coherence, and I commend the recent efforts of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) in engaging other parts of the United Nations system. CTED has helped Member States draft legal instruments and guidelines for preventative action, compiled rosters and databases that centralize information on resources available for prevention and response to terrorism, and, where requested, assessed the counter-terrorism capabilities of individual Member States. It has made 19 visits to Member States since September 2006, taking on board the contributions of many other members of the Task Force. We have also seen closer cooperation between all those bodies — CTED, the Monitoring Team and the Expert Group of the Security Council committees established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1540 (2004), respectively — which all helps to promote capacity-building for the effective implementation of the Security Council's resolutions. Those might seem like small steps, given the scale of the challenges, but that kind of patient, behind-the-scenes work is crucial to our efforts to combat terrorism.

Denying funds to terrorists and disrupting their activities are very important, but they are not enough on their own. In the long run, we want to reduce and eventually put a stop to people becoming terrorists in the first place. We have to understand the radicalizing influences that draw individuals into terrorism if we are to do that. We need to challenge the extremist ideology propagated by Al-Qaida and its sympathizers and encourage and support individuals and organizations offering positive alternatives. It is also important to improve opportunities open to young people and respond to their aspirations. Lack of access to justice, political disenfranchisement and unemployment can generate the frustration that lures vulnerable individuals in vulnerable communities into violent extremism.

I shall have the honour of taking part in the Secretary-General's symposium on supporting victims of terrorism a few days from now. That groundbreaking event will promote solidarity in support of victims of terrorism, one of the commitments we made in the Strategy. The best solidarity we can show is the effective implementation of the Strategy in all its aspects, with the goal of removing the scourge of terrorism altogether.

The task in front of us is huge. Since the Strategy was adopted two years ago, many hundreds of innocent people have been killed in attacks in all parts of the world by terrorists often citing religious justification for their actions. The willingness of terrorists to resort to suicide bombings means that they would be unlikely to hesitate to use weapons of mass destruction, given the opportunity. Al-Qaida and those groups and individuals buying into its ideology of intolerance continue to pose a risk to the lives of citizens in many of our countries, and they are a serious threat to international peace and stability. That challenge should remain high among the priorities of States Members of the United Nations and of the United Nations itself.

The meeting was adjourned at 1 p.m.